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NOTES AND NEWS.

It is gratifying to learn that in the ballot for motions in the House of Commons Sir William Wedderburn has secured first place on Tuesday, April 3, for his Indian motion as follows:—

Distress in India,—To call attention to the condition of the people of India; and to move, That, in view of the grievous sufferings which are again afflicting the people of India, a detailed and searching village enquiry should be instituted in order to ascertain the causes which impair the cultivators' powers to resist the attacks of famine and plague.

The *Times of India* notes in the middle of February that the situation had slightly improved in the Central Provinces. The crops in the northern districts have benefited by the recent rains, and the number in receipt of relief has decreased by 35,000, though nearly a million and a half remain on the works. In Bombay, on the other hand, "the position grows worse each week, and there is no prospect of a material improvement until the advent of the next monsoon." Madras has hitherto escaped, but it is already overshadowed by coming misfortune. "The crop prospects are poor and the yield in the Deccan is scanty. No famine works have yet been commenced; but test works for the relief of the weavers of Cuddapah are now being organised." Our contemporary concludes with the ominous words. "Not for another four months will the famine reach its most acute stage, and already three and three-quarter millions of people are in receipt of relief."

To this gloomy picture of the state of affairs in Bombay and Madras, the *Tribune* adds an equally sombre account of the position in the Punjab:—

The cattle are starving in almost all parts of the Province. As the winter rains have failed there is no hope of prospects improving this year. The only redeeming feature in the situation is the determination of the authorities to prevent loss of life at all costs.

The Central Government has done its best to put an end to "the only redeeming feature."

Lord Curzon, as we know, is of opinion that the Indians are now too ready to seek relief, but there are not wanting many instances to show that, so great is the need, those seeking aid are ready to undergo the hardest tests. One such test is mentioned in the *Champion*. As inoculation causes fever, eight annas are given to each person undergoing the operation as compensation.

Eight annas to each man, woman and half-grown child will keep the family from starvation for a week. By this time the fever will have gone, the family present themselves for inoculation at a station in another part of the town, and are again compensated. The inoculation leaves no mark, and there are therefore no means of detection. After the third or fourth inoculation tired Nature succumbs, and these poor over-inoculated people, who have no homes and sleep in the chill open air, go to swell the records of our present excessively abnormal mortality.

Who will say that these people were not in need of relief; and what test could be devised more decisive than a weekly inoculation?

An "Observer" attacks Mr. Dutt's theory of over-assessment as a cause of famine in the columns of the *Pioneer*. In the first place he insists that where rents are too high, it is the zemindars rather than the Government who are at fault. He concedes, however, that "if we had not the intermediate class of zemindars, then surely the argument of Mr. Dutt would have been of some worth." Now, as it happens, Mr. Dutt drew his figures not only from zemindari but from ryotwari Provinces like Madras, and therefore, so far as regards the latter, his argument by the admission of his opponent is sound. Moreover, it is surely illogical to account for a general result by a cause which could only affect particular Provinces—for the zemindar is not universal. Secondly, "Observer" brings forward two causes of famine neglected by Mr. Dutt, the conservatism of the people and their fondness for litigation. But it is curious that while he blames Mr. Dutt for being too ready to make the Government responsible, he admits that its laws have fostered this inclination to go to law. He says "our laws are in too advanced a stage to fit in with the condition of backward communities. But we cannot ask a civilised Government to formulate crude laws, because we ourselves are crude." It is surely a curious contention that the laws are to suit the rulers rather than the ruled. This is "India for the English" with a vengeance.

Lord Onslow, in his reply to Lord Reay (March 5), spoke half a column of the *Times* about the famine, but said nothing fresh or important. It does seem strange to hear the Under-Secretary for India in one breath regret the unparalleled magnitude of the famine and in the next breath state that "fortunately they were forearmed to meet these calamities." To some extent forearmed, of course; but not forearmed, evidently, for such a task as has been set out for them. Is it possible that Lord Onslow was correct in stating that "with regard to what had been done and the course of the famine the latest information they had was about the end of January"—five or six weeks ago? As to the anticipated cost the Viceroy's vague estimate, when the Government heard from him last, was "something like three, or possibly four crores of rupees." But, though the Government "had no official estimates," they believed, said Lord Onslow, that the expenditure was "likely to amount to as much as, and possibly more than five crores of rupees." We hope that Lord Reay was more edified by the perfunctory remarks of the Under-Secretary than the public seem likely to be. For our own part, we shall not affect to be surprised if the famine expenditure runs to double the amount anticipated by Lord Onslow.

Lord Dufferin moved the principal resolution at the public meeting held in Belfast (March 6) to promote a relief fund for the famine in India. He acknowledged his own good fortune in escaping a visitation during his Viceroyalty, and described the means adopted for dealing with the famine. "He could say with perfect truth that the history of the world had never presented such a spectacle as that which was seen when a Government by its sole exertions was enabled to sustain and to keep the body and soul together of such multitudes." That is the official point of view, and from that standpoint the assertion is no doubt perfectly true. But there is another view, and that is that the history of the world has never presented such a spectacle as a world-wide Power permitting 60,000,000 of its subjects and quasi-subjects to fall into such a terrible calamity, and that at frequent intervals, indeed more and more frequently recurring intervals. Relief is good; but surely, on all grounds, prevention is incomparably better. And what has the Government done, and what the Government doing, by way of prevention?

We would direct Lord Dufferin's attention to a letter that has just been addressed to Lord Curzon on the recent Land Settlement in the Central Provinces by Mr. Romesh C. Dutt, C.I.E., late officiating Commissioner of Orissa and President of the last Indian National Congress. Everyone will probably agree with Mr. Dutt that "the impoverishment of an Indian Province under British administration is a more serious calamity than any defeat or disaster which has been known in the history of British rule in India." The causes, therefore, ought to be carefully in-

vestigated with a view to prevention. The Central Provinces, with a population of some ten millions of her Majesty's Indian subjects, call for special enquiry; for, as Mr. Dutt points out, they "have suffered most acutely during the famines of 1897 and of the present year, and they are at present the most helpless and resourceless class of peasantry in all India." To Mr. Dutt, who has made particular enquiries into their condition, "the main reason of their wretchedness is manifest." That reason lies in the action of the Government. Let Mr. Dutt state his facts and his conclusions in his own words:—

My information is that the rents now fixed can with difficulty be paid even in years of good harvest, that they leave no fair margin for saving for bad years, and that they can never be realised by Malguzars from year to year. Large tracts of the country which were previously under cultivation had gone out of cultivation owing to over-assessment, and instances have occurred in which Malguzars have applied to surrender their estates in order to be relieved of their liability to pay a Government revenue which they cannot pay, and their application has not been granted. The condition of the peasantry and the landlords alike, after this new Settlement, contrasts unfavourably with the condition of the same classes in Northern India, and as the period of Settlement too has been unwisely reduced, there is no prospect, either in the immediate or in the remote future, of an improvement in the condition of the people from a state of hopeless penury and indebtedness.

"Hopeless penury and indebtedness"—and then comes famine, and people at home are shocked to learn that millions are on relief, and many millions more on the verge of the necessity of relief. Yet officialdom enlarges complacently upon the measures of relief, for which of course we are profoundly thankful, but officialdom takes care not to enlarge upon the oppressive assessments that lead to "hopeless penury and indebtedness." Mr. Dutt points out that a "double injustice was perpetrated in the first settlement of the Central Provinces (1860): the rents payable by cultivators to Malguzars were fixed too high"—about one-third of the gross produce (that is, about double the rate prescribed by the old Hindu Law)—and "the revenue payable by Malguzars to the Government was fixed too high," one half of the Malguzars' assets according to Government orders, but "sometimes 75 per cent." in practice, under what authority Mr. Dutt has been unable to discover. But there was one redeeming feature: the Settlement was made for thirty years. Under the Settlement effected since 1890, however, the period has been reduced to twenty years. Rents have been enhanced "after very complicated calculations," involving an element of "general considerations," which is naturally elastic and liable to error; and the revenue demanded from the Malguzars has mounted to 65 per cent. in certain cases and 60 per cent. as the maximum in other cases, to which has to be added 12½ per cent. as rates, so that "between 70 and 80 per cent. of the landlord's *supposed* assets, *i.e.*, nearly 100 per cent. of his *real* assets are now demanded by the Government as revenue." No wonder this new Settlement "has been felt as more harsh and severe, and has caused more actual suffering and distress, than any previous Settlement in any part of India."

Mr. Dutt asks pertinently:—

If after the experience of nearly a century of administration, it has been found in Northern India that the wisest, safest, and most considerate policy is to let landlords make their own arrangements with cultivators as regards rents, subject to salutary checks imposed by the Government, is it a wise policy in the Central Provinces for the Government to fix, after calculations which are unintelligible alike to landlord and tenant, what rent each cultivator should pay for his holding? If private landlords in Northern India consider one-fifth of the gross produce a fair rent for the lands held by their tenants, is it considerate of the British Government to impose on the poorer peasantry of the Central Provinces a rental of one-third or more of the gross produce? And if the Government of the North-Western Provinces consider 40 per cent. of the landlord's assets as fair Government revenue (*vide* Sir A. P. Macdonnell's evidence before the Currency Committee), will your Excellency's Government sanction and approve of the State demand of 60 or 65 per cent. in the Central Provinces *plus* 12½ per cent. as rates?

Mr. Dutt suggests the institution of an enquiry on the cessation of the famine, and offers to serve on a Commission. We are extremely glad that Mr. Dutt had the opportunity of discussing this important question personally with Lord Curzon, and we earnestly hope that the results will be satisfactory to all parties concerned.

Taking its cue from Lord Curzon's "very gloomy outlook," the *Globe* (London) advances the extravagant assertion that "the previous famine pales into insignificance in comparison" with the present one. But "happily there is one source of comfort," it goes on to say. Well, what? "The Calcutta Treasury happens to be in such affluent circumstances that whatever money can do to save life will be done with a generous hand." Lord Curzon will be interested to learn that his treasury is in "affluent circumstances;" and perhaps Lord George Hamilton will be sorry that he spoke about the "credit" of the Government of India. Really a first-class London evening paper of Imperial aspirations might be expected to know at least the elementary facts of a situation that is so grave both for India and for the Empire.

Yet the *Globe* does mean well. After having talked arrant nonsense about the famine, it proceeds to make a most sympathetic reference to the Indian stretcher-bearers —"coolie-bearers," it calls them—who have distinguished themselves so markedly in the South Africa War. It says:—

It is not going too far to assert that their faithful co-operation has been of priceless value to our commanders. Essentially men of peace —they do not belong to the warlike races—they nevertheless face the dangers of war with splendid courage, simply through fidelity to their salt.

They have no doubt saved many valuable lives, and their courage has been lauded by everybody. So we will not quarrel in the meantime about their warlike or unwarlike character, though the *Globe* has something to learn on that point too. We will simply add the suggestion our contemporary bases upon their deserts:—

It is matter for surprise, therefore, that among the many Anglo-Indians resident in England no one has yet come forward with a proposal for a "Bearers' Comforts Fund." Quite a moderate sum would suffice if judiciously expended: the comforts should be of a strictly material kind, such as tea, tobacco, and, whenever possible, ghee. . . . . Nor would it be out of the way if a welcome supply of cash was added to the gift. But the first thing is to give practical recognition to the splendid services of these faithful men by starting a fund to tone down, in some measure, the asperities inseparable from their employment.

Very good. But the *Globe* had better start the Fund itself; if it knew a little more about "well-known Anglo-Indians," it would not be so hopeful about getting a committee of them to take the initiative. It is a most timely and kindly proposal and we earnestly trust the *Globe* will carry it out. But will the *Globe* advocate the simplest civil justice to these meritorious men and their fellow-countrymen, once the war is over? We shall take note.

A correspondent of the *Friend of India* is of opinion that the number of Indians settled in Natal shows that the alleged ill-treatment of Indians there cannot be serious; 20,000 Indians are entitled to a free return passage to India, yet only 120 went back during last year. Even the war caused no exodus. This, however, proves nothing as to the way in which the Indians are treated. It would have to be very terrible ill-treatment that would make prosperous Indian market-gardeners leave their homesteads in Natal for famine-stricken and plague-stricken India. It is, indeed, satisfactory to know that the Supreme Court will do justice to Indians. Is it too much to hope that the same spirit may one day be found in all classes throughout the Colony?

Has the Viceroy's Legislative Council really gone demented? There is pending before it an extraordinary Bill to amend further the Whipping Act, so as to render the offence of rioting armed with a deadly weapon punishable with whipping instead of any other punishment already provided by the Penal Code. If the Viceroy wants public opinion on the measure it lies ready to his hand. The *Indian Daily News* for example says:—

It will be nothing more nor less than outrage upon public sentiment to pass the measure as it stands, for not one single landowner in the mofussil will be able to reckon himself safe from a conviction under its provisions.

The *Indian Social Reformer*:—

If mercy is twice blessed, flogging is twice degraded; it degrades him that flogs and him that is flogged.

Capital:—

Let Lord Curzon pass an Act to scourge those officials who bring disgrace on their order (as in the Chupra case), and he will deserve well of this country; but let it not be said that, in a time of famine and distress, when the people asked for bread he gave them a stone; that, in a time of war and trouble, when the resources of the Empire are strained, and every effort should be made to cement the Indian

people to Great Britain, he passed a Bill to enable boy magistrates to whip respectable Zemindars, and alienate their allegiance to the Crown. . . . The thing is an outrage.

The *Madras Standard*:—

If the object of the present-day lawgivers of India be to brutalise the criminal classes and destroy what little of self-respect may be lurking in their feelings, that object cannot be more effectively attained than by the passing of the proposed amendment to the Whipping Act.

We hope the Government of India is not proceeding upon the venerable fallacy that garotting was put down in England by the application of the lash. Mr. Raleigh at all events knows better.

With the withdrawal of the clause of the Whipping Bill extending whipping to cases of riot, the *Amrita Bazar Patrika* considers that "the fangs of the measure have been taken out." It desires, however, that offences punishable by fine should be expressly excluded, and that when an appeal is lodged the whipping should be postponed till the decision has been given, proper security being taken for the appearance of the accused. As it says: "A man cannot be unwhipped when he has once been whipped." The Bill is likely to be passed at the next meeting of the Legislative Council.

A Bombay correspondent writes (February 17):—The Press Messages Bill is likely to give a bad quarter of an hour to its authors who, in face of unanimous opposition, save from two or three proprietors of newspapers patronised by the Government, are intent on passing it in the modified form in which it has emerged from the Select Committee. It will come on for third reading a fortnight hence. Meanwhile the Hon. Mr. Ananda Charlu, of Madras, has asked the Government whether it subscribes to Reuter's telegrams, and whether it makes use of them elsewhere. A sort of answer has been given which has set the critics of the Bill thinking. Reuter, it seems, gets Rs. 1,250 per month for the telegrams for which the Government of India subscribes, and which, according to its admission, it afterwards transmits inland. To whom? That is a mystery which needs to be cleared up. For whose special benefit does the Government spend £1,000 per annum from the monies of the taxpayers?

There is one point in Lord Sandhurst's administration which even his most fervent admirers do not attempt to defend—his treatment of the Natus. The *Bengalee* draws attention to the speech of Sir Bhalchandra at the public meeting in Bombay, wherein he tried to excuse the retiring Governor on the ground that he was "possibly the instrument of others." Our contemporary adds:—

What a justification for the ruler of a great Province—an instrument in the hands of others, having no mind of his own!

Is not the excuse the severest condemnation?

Irksome as it is to return to the punkha-coolie case, it seems well to place on record the facts brought out at the trial of Private O'Gara at Lahore. About ten o'clock on the evening of August 24 last, O'Gara went from the barrack-room (at Peshawar) to the verandah and struck the punkha-coolie. O'Gara himself stated in evidence that he struck the coolie three or four times with his fist, because the man had taken no notice of his admonitions to pull hard. Two corporals, professing to be eye-witnesses, swore most positively that O'Gara struck the coolie only with his fist. Two other punkha-coolies, also eye-witnesses, swore that O'Gara struck the coolie with a dumb-bell on the head. The Assistant Civil Surgeon, who made the *post mortem* examination, stated positively that the blow must have been dealt with a hard, heavy, blunt instrument of spherical shape—like a dumb-bell; that the wound was in the right temple, that the bone was depressed, and that there were three fractures of the skull radiating from the depression. The jury acquitted O'Gara, not merely of murder, but also of grievous hurt. They evidently disbelieved the coolies, and did not think O'Gara's fist hard enough for the job. It would be sanguine to anticipate that any other person will be brought to justice for the crime. It is an exceedingly ugly "accident."

The Indian mail brings an interesting account of the prize distribution at the Thakore Saheb of Gondal's Grasia College by the Gaekwar of Baroda, who had been visiting his famine-stricken districts in Kathiawar. The College, which was opened in 1897, has thriven exceedingly under Principal Moor, who has been supported strongly by the indefatigable care of the Thakore Saheb. It has now sixty-five students on the register. Still the Thakore Saheb has to express his regret that "the condition of our Grasias is becoming worse every day," and he attributes the result "chiefly to their culpable indifference to education." The Thakore Saheb has personally exhibited the finest example to the other princes of India, having himself taken the M.D. degree at Edinburgh University and written the history of Indian medicine, as well as done his utmost to foster education in his State. The educational activity of his neighbour, the Gaekwar, has also been very distinguished. He has sent many of his youthful subjects to study various practical subjects in Europe, and at home has even gone so far as to attempt to start compulsory education. We take a sentence or two from his admirable address on this occasion:—

Whenever in future any able and impartial historian happens to write an account of the Native States, he will find plenty of material to show how the different States, with the limited means at their disposal, and with the men and civilisation of society they could command, have striven to carry on the cause of progress and reform as understood in the closing years of the 19th century. He will be struck with the immense sacrifices the Native chiefs have made of their inherited notions and deep-rooted and fondly-cherished interests and prejudices to subserve the cause of reform. Considering all the circumstances, it strikes me that the strides made in the cause of good government in many of the States during the last few years have been gigantic and rapid.

An interesting account of the proud and warlike Grasias (or Girasias) was given by Sir William Wedderburn in an article entitled "A Magnanimous Indian Prince," on the formal opening of the Grasia College (INDIA, vol. xi, p. 33, January 20, 1899).

The following reads as a strong condemnation of a Government measure:—

The Government have chosen a most inopportune time for the introduction of a change in the rules governing the grant of grain compensation to the Native troops of the Bombay army, which if persisted in, can only exercise a most detrimental effect upon the physique and condition of the men.

But this passage occurs—not in some journal supporting the Congress, but in the *Times of India*. By the new rules, thus unsparingly condemned, the privilege accorded to the troops of consuming provisions of the first quality and drawing compensation accordingly is withdrawn. Henceforth, the basis on which the compensation is calculated is to be the quality of food generally eaten at the place where they are stationed by men of the class from which sepoys are generally drawn. And this is a very unsuitable standard in a time of famine.

Mr. David Yule delivered another trenchant speech (Feb. 3) at the half-yearly meeting of the shareholders of the Bank of Calcutta, of which he is the very able chairman. Mr. Yule pursued his argument against the fatuous Gold Standard. Anticipating that this famine will be no less costly than the last, which ran over eight crores of rupees, Mr. Yule thinks that a loan of at least five crores will fall to be placed in London, and "the Government is obliged to disregard the recommendation made in the concluding paragraph of the Report of the Currency Committee to avoid increasing the sterling debt of India." Lord George Hamilton will no doubt be diplomatically surprised at this contingency. Mr. Yule says:—

These constant additions to the gold liabilities, which, since the closing of the mints, amount to about £30,000,000, bind the Government hand and foot to persevere with the Gold Standard scheme, however hurtful it may ultimately be discovered to be to the country.

Mr. Yule is not enamoured of the projected Imperial Bank of India, but he is quite clear as to what he does want:—

Capital would be found in India fast enough for banking purposes if men could also be discovered to work it and guard it. Men with the necessary experience, ability, and caution to work an Indian Bank successfully are as scarce as the foreign capitalists who have come to India since 1893, and European capital and methods of banking can never enter into competition with the inimitable system of finance which exists wherever two or more Marwaris are gathered together. What we all want, gentlemen, is a free and automatic currency suitable for the requirements of the people. Without it, India will be a land of famine and trouble, dead to all industrial effort.

And that is a painfully true word.

THE LONDON INDIAN CONFERENCE.

THE annual Conference of the London Indian Society, held on March 1, at the Westminster Town Hall, brought together a large and representative gathering of Indians resident in the United Kingdom. Apart from the gloom hanging so thick and sombre over India, the spirit of the assemblage was somewhat damped by the announcement that Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji, the Grand Old Man of India, was not yet sufficiently recovered from his illness to take his usual place in the chair. Fortunately, however, Mr. Dadabhai exhibited yet another proof of his indefatigable energy by sending the substance of his intended remarks to be read by Mr. Pillai, the editor of the *Madras Standard*, who was chosen to preside. The other outstanding feature of the meeting was a strong letter from Mr. William Digby, C.I.E., who was in Paris, and therefore unable to be present in person to speak to the Famine resolution out of his peculiarly ample and first-hand experiences. At the same time, it was satisfactory to observe how well the younger members of the Society are shaping to the important work of representing their country before the British public with knowledge, self-restraint, and proper courage.

The first resolution was naturally addressed to the imperious claims of the Famine which is ravaging so large a portion of India. It was in these terms:—

> That this Conference is of opinion that the Famines of India are preventable; that the main cause is the evil of the drain from the resources of India caused by an unnatural economic system of government, and that until this cause is fully faced and dealt with there is no chance for an effective remedy or for the general welfare of the people of India; that for the immediate remedy for the present calamity this Conference, while very thankful for the Mansion House Fund and other similar efforts, prays for a substantial financial assistance by a direct grant from the British Exchequer.

Mr. Pillai moved the resolution concisely and efficiently, and read Mr. Dadabhai's notes. If Mr. Dadabhai had done nothing more for India than this one thing—to point out, and insist incessantly upon, the fundamental mischief in the British government and administration of India—he would have deserved right well of his country, and of the Empire. He thankfully acknowledged the aid of the Press and the temporary relief supplied by generous sympathy through the Lord Mayor's and other funds, but he was not to be diverted from the central facts on a full recognition of which depends the permanent resuscitation and salvation of the country. He affirmed that famine is no more inevitable in India than it is in England. England, he pointed out, does not produce enough food to support its population—indeed not one-third or one-fourth of the necessary amount; and yet there is no famine in England. What makes the difference? Why, simply that England is able to purchase what is needed, while India is not able. As Mr. C. M. Thacker said in seconding the Resolution, there is plenty of food in India, and plenty of railways to bring it to the famishing districts, but the people have not the money wherewith to buy the food they so painfully require. The means of the people are exhausted.

And how has this appalling situation come about? Clearly "the main cause is the evil of the drain from the resources of India caused by an unnatural economic system of government." Mr. Dadabhai draws from history what Mr. Digby justly describes as "perhaps the most serious indictment ever brought against any body of rulers"—"certainly the most terrible charge ever brought against a ruling race whose most strenuous desire has been to bring prosperity and upliftment to the people ruled, and not to become guilty of spoliation." And yet, as Mr. Digby went on to say, "deliberate spoliation, ruthlessly carried out, could scarcely be more destructive, or cause more suffering." It is a commonplace of our orators to contrast the benign British Government with the rule of the devastating conquerors of earlier centuries. But an occasional tornado of devastation was a small affair in comparison with a continuous process of draining the life blood of the country; and in any case whatever the devastators did carry off they at least dissipated it again among the people—they did not spend it elsewhere. In spite of all these devastations, the people did contrive to live in general comfort, and there was much wealth in the land. A few weeks ago we quoted Sir Philip Francis's expression in 1776: "the wonderful mass of wealth we found here"—that is, in Bengal. How promptly we had proceeded to appropriate this wealth may be seen in Clive's remarkable letter of September 30, 1765, to the Court of Directors, in which he speaks of "transactions which seem to demonstrate that every spring of this Government was smeared with corruption, that principles of rapacity and oppression universally prevailed, and that every spark of sentiment and public spirit was lost and extinguished in the unbounded lust of unmerited wealth." Mr. Dadabhai stirred this repulsive cesspool at a point about half a century later. Recalling that the Company remitted—apart altogether from the not readily assessable private remittances, corrupt and incorrupt, oppressive or otherwise—some £3,000,000 a year, he quoted Mr. Montgomery Martin's remarks on an account of the condition of Bengal and Behar in 1807-16, after examining it at the India House in 1835:—

> It is impossible to avoid remarking two facts as peculiarly striking—first, the richness of the country, and, second, the poverty of its inhabitants. The annual drain of £3,000,000 on British India has amounted in thirty years at 12 per cent. to the enormous sum of £723,000,000 sterling. . . . . So constant and accumulating a drain even in England would soon impoverish her. How severe, then, must be its effects on India, where the wage of the labourer is from twopence to threepence a day.

And this heavy public remittance has now expanded from £3,000,000 a year to six times as much; and, if proper regard be had to the effect of the institution of an artificial rupee, to somewhere about ten times as much—say, Rs. 300,000,000 (of which one-third is insidiously concealed by the artificial monetary prestidigitation of recent statesmanship). Well might Lord Salisbury describe this as a process of "bleeding." And the results are at last upon us. What will Lord Salisbury have to say to the resolution which the Conference decided to send to him?

Mr. Dadabhai pointed out that, while India has been carrying on innumerable wars (as we showed last week) and maintaining the British Indian Empire, "not a single farthing has ever been spent by the British people." He cited the case of the Mutiny. In that trying time the people "remained thoroughly loyal"; not only so, but they formed even new regiments to fight against their own kith and kin for the British. And what was their reward? The whole cost of the outbreak was piled on their shoulders. Against this proceeding Mr. Bright (among others) earnestly protested. "I think," said Mr. Bright (*Times*, March 8, 1859), "that the forty millions which the revolt will cost is a grievous burden to place upon the people of India. It has come from the mismanagement of the Parliament and people of England. If every man had what is just, no doubt that £40,000,000 would have to be paid out of the taxes levied upon the people of this country." But not a farthing of it escaped the people of India. Again, Mr. Dadabhai cited the first and second Afghan wars, towards the enormous expense of which the British Government contributed only a mite of £5,000,000 in respect of the latter; and, in fact, this remains the sole contribution made by the British Government towards the cost of any Indian military enterprise. Little wonder that India is "the poorest and most wretched country on the face of the earth." Contrast with this treatment the hundreds of millions we have expended upon the Colonies.

The orange has been sucked almost dry. The management of the resources of India has been in British hands for (say) a century, and the result of the belauded "trusteeship" is that the people are so exhausted that they cannot any longer resist the first onset of famine. Charity even in half millions is all very fine in its way; but it is very plain that the British Government would be discharging but an insignificant item of its moral indebtedness to India if it paid the whole charge of the famine at a single stroke. The amount would be but the return of a fraction of the "drain" of a single year. But it may be doubted whether even Lord Salisbury has yet taken to heart the full significance of Sir William Hunter's earnest remonstrance:—

> I hope that this country will realise once for all the poverty of the people from whom Indian revenues are raised. When we have clearly recognised this, we shall see that the smallest act of financial sharp dealing with India is an act not only of iniquity, but of cruelty and meanness, and one which carries with it lasting reproach.

But, as Mr. Digby contended, it is high time "that attention should be directed to a series of drastic reforms amounting to an administrative and economic revolution." For, otherwise, the consequences are certain to be appalling.

Again Sir William Hunter has pointed out one of the obvious remedies, and Mr. Dadabhai insisted upon it for the hundredth time :—

> You cannot (said Sir William Hunter) work with imported labour as cheaply as you can with Native labour, and I regard the more extended employment of the Natives not only as an act of justice but as a financial necessity. . . . If we are to govern the Indian people efficiently and cheaply, we must govern them by means of themselves and pay for the administration at the market rates of Native labour.

This, as Mr. Dadabhai says, is "the key to the whole position," internally; and the principle has been admitted by the Duke of Devonshire, Lord Iddesleigh, and even Lord Lytton. It is sheer official fatuity to hurry on the down grade as at present, out of ostrich-like concern for an untenable "prestige." If our prestige is to be good for anything, it must find a more solid basis.

We were glad to observe that the second resolution, expressing "deep concern for the political disabilities and troubles of Indian subjects of her Majesty in South Africa," and urging the Government to "effectively remedy this state of affairs on the conclusion of the war," was received with deep sympathy and voted unanimously. We trust that Indian expectations will not be disappointed, especially in view of the splendid conduct of the Indian contingent of stretcher-bearers in the field.

TWO JUDICIAL SCANDALS.

It has long been the boast of Englishmen that they have given India a pure and impartial system of justice; and so far as the High Courts are concerned, the Indian people have gratefully acknowledged that this is true. The respect evoked by these courts, whose great traditions have been maintained by a long series of judges, both English and Indian, gives the lie to those charges of a tendency to undue criticism so freely levelled at educated India. But it must be admitted that below the Courts of Appeal there is less to praise and more to blame. That the vast majority of magistrates in India seek to do justice no one would for a moment deny; but it is obvious that where there is a bias due to the prejudice of race, or to an over-zealous desire to support authority, the present system gives many opportunities for the working of injustice, even though no wrong was planned or even suspected. The leaders of Indian opinion have insisted over and over again that the confusion of executive and judicial functions is a disgrace to Indian administration and a danger to Indian justice. The claim for a separation has been met by two arguments. It has been objected to on the ground of expense; and it has been urged that, however indefensible in theory, this confusion causes no harm in practice. As to the first ground of defence, it is sufficient to say that a very considerable separation of the magistracy from the executive has been shown to be possible at a very slightly increased cost. As to the second, it can only be met by instances to the contrary. Two such instances have lately arisen; one the well-known Chupra case, in which great blame attaches to the officials whose conduct was investigated; the other case which has attracted much less attention, and which is, perhaps, all the more decisive in that no intentional misconduct is imputed to the magistrate chiefly concerned. Whatever there was of impropriety in his proceedings flowed from the evil system in which he worked.

Mr. Garrett is one of those officers who perform both judicial and executive duties, and as part of the latter, he has to act as guardian of minors. Now it so happened that one of his wards, a young zemindar of his district, was reported to have been robbed by his tutor. Mr. Garrett looked into the matter and considered that the man should be brought to trial. He accordingly in his capacity of guardian of the young zemindar prayed himself, in his capacity of a magistrate to take cognisance of the case. When, indeed, the defendant came up for trial, Mr. Garrett saw that he could no longer continue to act in the double capacity of prosecutor and judge, so he appointed one of his subordinates to try the case. Even this was an arrangement which was open to objection. For the judge to be a subordinate of the prosecutor, though quite compatible with fair dealing, could hardly fail to leave a rankling suspicion in the mind of the prisoner and his friends in the event of his being convicted. But matters went even further than this, for although the prosecutor did not actually adjudicate, he sat in Court, and it is alleged, gave his subordinate the benefit of his advice. He had no personal interest in the matter, and even if he did confer with the magistrate actually engaged in trying the case, it was doubtless only in order to give a less experienced officer the benefit of his own superior knowledge; but the effect was what might have been expected. The defendant appealed to the High Court, which has now ordered that the case shall be re-tried in another district.

Here, then, is an example of the economy of this confusion of the powers—a first trial, an appeal to the High Court, and a second trial before another magistrate. The High Court has, it is true, prevented any miscarriage of justice, but it is no slight hardship to the defendant—whether he be innocent or guilty—that in order to secure a trial in which there shall be no suspicion of partiality, he has had to suffer the cost and delay of an appeal to the High Court and a second trial. Nor is it a small evil that this suspicion of partiality, however little deserved, should attach to any proceedings in the courts of our Indian Empire.

The other case is of a more disagreeable character, since in the first place, English officials were at fault from the beginning, secondly, other officials used their position to shield their guilty brother-officers even at the risk of punishing the innocent, and thirdly, the Government by the inadequate penalties imposed have almost made themselves partakers in the iniquity. It may be asked whether it is advisable to rake up a scandal, already noticed at great length. It is a fair question; but the answer is ready. The scandal has been reopened, not by us but by the Government of India, owing to the treatment meted out to the officials concerned; it has been reopened, not in our pages but in those of the two chief Anglo-Indian newspapers of Calcutta. The readers of INDIA have already heard of the two outspoken letters—one from an Australian, the other from an Englishman—which have appeared in the pages of the *Englishman*. These have been followed up by a third letter in the same paper, and by a leading article in the *Friend of India*.

The details of the Chupra case have already been given in our pages. Suffice it to say that Mr. Corbett, Assistant Superintendent of Police, and Mr. Simkins, District Engineer, struck and beat a policeman on sick leave, Nursingh Singh, because he would not take part in forced labour and was impudent, even saying that he and the villagers were free men. Next day Nursingh Singh went to the hospital, and the officials fearing a complaint, took counsel with Mr. Twidell, the District Magistrate. As a result of the conference, Mr. Corbett arrested Nursingh Singh. At his trial, the District Superintendent of Police sat beside the Deputy-Magistrate, Moulvi Zakir Hossein, who tried the case, and there were frequent adjournments to the magistrate's private room. Finally, Nursingh Singh was sentenced to two months' rigorous imprisonment. This judgment was set aside by Mr. Pennell, on appeal, in his celebrated judgment, and the public has been waiting patiently for the retribution that was surely in store for the guilty officials. As to the Moulvi, there was no difficulty in his case. In theory he was the most guilty of all, but the reception given to Mr. Pennell's judgment shows how difficult it would have been for him to play the same part. As Mr. Pennell said of him, "he did not dare to acquit." Mr. Twidell did not deny that he gave the Deputy-Magistrate a hint as to how he was to decide the case. From Mr. Bolton's answers in the Bengal Legislative Council, it appears that the promotion of two of the European officers has been stopped for a year, and two others have been censured. This is hardly a sufficient punishment for conduct which Mr. Bolton admitted to be indefensible. As the *Friend of India* says:

> A Magistrate who uses his influence with a subordinate Judge to induce him to convict a person whose prosecution he has ordered, stamps himself as unfit for the charge of a district.

Is then this trivial penalty the only one exacted? No, there is still one other, only it has fallen not on the guilty but on the innocent; not on those who had perverted the course of justice, but on the man who had vindicated it. Mr. Pennell has been transferred to Noakhali, one of the least desirable stations in the Province. It is true that the Government have from the first denied that Mr. Pennell's transfer had any connexion with the Chupra case, and this denial we have hitherto accepted, but Mr. Bolton's reply on this point has done

much to shake our confidence. Mr. Bolton stated that the order transferring Mr. Pennell to Noakhali was made before the Government saw his judgment. Now what are the facts as given in the *Englishman?* Mr. Pennell was acting as Judge at Saran during Mr. Anderson's absence. Mr. Anderson's leave having nearly expired, Mr. Pennell asked the Chief Secretary by telegraph where he was to go next. The reply was that he was to stay at Saran as additional judge, and on October 11 he was so gazetted. He had given his judgment in the Chupra case on October 6, two days before he telegraphed to the Chief Secretary. On October 18 he was gazetted to Noakhali. Now what happened between October 11 and 18 to cause such a change in the intentions of the Government? Mr. Bolton tells us of nothing. He only says that they had not "seen" the judgment. It is quite possible to accept that statement. But it is very difficult to believe that they had not heard of the part Mr. Pennell had played, and indeed Mr. Bolton does not suggest anything of the kind. In any case a much more complete defence is necessary in order to clear the Government of Bengal from one of the most serious charges that have ever been made against any Government—that of punishing a judge for administering justice without fear or favour. Compared with this, it is a slight offence to have let the guilty go with an inadequate penalty; yet here, too, some further defence is urgently required. The Chupra case was a terrible scandal in itself. The Government of Bengal seem bent on making it a hundred times worse.

OUR LONDON LETTER.

WESTMINSTER, Thursday.

LONG faces were pulled in the House of Commons on Monday, when Sir M. Hicks Beach produced the reckoning for Mr. Chamberlain's war. A shilling income tax, an additional shilling on beer, sixpence more on whiskey, fourpence on tobacco, sixpence on cigars, a shilling on the note contracts of the Produce Exchange—as item followed item, the gloom deepened on loyal Ministerial faces and an irrepressible moan mingled with the cheers of a strangely elated Opposition. The scene reminded one of an anecdote with which a former generation was familiar in its school reading-books. A poor fisherman having with difficulty obtained admittance to the presence of the master of a great household astonished the magnate by naming as the price of his day's catch a hundred blows of the bastinado. His whim was gratified, but at the fiftieth stroke the merchant, calling a halt, explained that the balance must be awarded to the magnate's steward, the latter with the proverbial avarice of his class having stipulated that in consideration of his complaisance in allowing him access, the fisherman must divide with him half of the proceeds of the sale. The steward thereupon, being called to the front, was subjected to a vehement application of the torture, while the fisherman standing by rubbed his hands with glee and forgot his own bruises. So did the Liberals stand by on Monday, shouting not with agony at each successive stroke of fresh taxation on their own shoulders, but with joy as they saw their Jingo opponents wincing under the punishment of the same rod. It was scarcely an edifying spectacle but a cynic would have said that it was full of human nature.

"Pay, pay, pay!" sing the Jingoes of the music halls. What they really mean, says Sir William Harcourt, is "Borrow, borrow, borrow!" The Budget provides for a loan towards the cost of the war of no less than £43,000,000. Taxation is to produce only £12,000,000 of the £60,000,000 required. At the time of the Crimean War, when the country possessed not half of its present wealth, as much as £40,000,000 was raised out of taxation and only £30,000,000 by loan. But Sir Michael Hicks Beach has gone as far as he dared go. The glum faces of his political friends on Monday night were an eloquent testimony to the courage of his proposals, timid though these undoubtedly seem in comparison with the heroic measures of fifty years ago. Another penny on the income-tax might have meant revolt, and another shilling on beer defeat. Mr. Balfour stened to the speech with obvious discomfort, and at each repetition of the Liberal applause Mr. Chamberlain's depression visibly deepened. Next day the *Times* vented its spleen by declaring that a schoolboy could have prepared as good a Budget, while the *Standard*, less splenetic but equally frank, pointed to the unconcealed jubilation of the Opposition as a proof of the unpopular character of the Ministerial proposals. A dissolution Budget had been predicted, but madly Imperialistic as we are all supposed to be, nobody could pretend that our patriotism was likely to be stimulated by an attack on our purses.

Sham patriotism has suffered some amusing exposures under the financial test. The precipitate introduction of the Budget was actually due in a certain degree to the extraordinary stimulus which the fear of extra taxation had given to the withdrawal of dutiable goods from bond. After the announcement of last Friday the rush developed into a panic. Traders complained bitterly on Monday of the want of expedition at the Customs House in facilitating their evasive operations. Their object, in the blunt language of Sir M. Hicks Beach, was first to deprive the Exchequer of the benefit of the proposed additional taxation and then to impose on their customers an increased price on the plea of augmented duties which had not been paid. Yet, strange to say, those enterprising gentlemen actually relieved the tedium of their waiting hours at the Customs House by singing patriotic airs.

Confound their politics,
Frustrate their knavish tricks!

—so they sang in all the simplicity of unconscious humour. "Rule Britannia" was another favourite anthem, and with the day's work they ultimately warmed to "Soldiers of the Queen." Sir M. Hicks Beach visited the scene in person and was heartily applauded as the Ministerial representative of a just and righteous war. Nevertheless, the Chancellor of the Exchequer was callous enough in the House of Commons to speak in condemnation of those inspiriting proceedings and to threaten that in future years he should endeavour to frustrate their repetition.

But even more instructive has been the action, recently brought to light, of certain wealthy and "patriotic" territorial magnates in evading the Death Duties. This scandal was undoubtedly present to the mind of Sir M. Hicks Beach when he paid a parenthetical but grateful tribute to the memory of honest "Chicago Smith," the American multi-millionaire who lived in a London club on fifteen shillings a day, and was content that the British treasury should benefit by his death to the extent of nearly a million sterling. "He may not have lived like a lord," was Sir William Harcourt's epitaph on this wealthy citizen, "but at least he died like a gentleman." The compliment was double-edged, for in the same speech Sir William, in a reminiscent mood, permitted himself to recall the "Anti-Jacobin" parody of "Chevy Chase" which relates how "Duke Smithson of Northumberland" contrived that at his death the revenue should derive no benefit from his immense possessions.

Almost at the very moment when the Chancellor of the Exchequer in the House of Commons was dwelling on the abounding prosperity of Great Britain—a prosperity which but for the war would have yielded, in place of the actual deficit of £60,000,000, a surplus of more than £5,000,000—Lord Onslow in the House of Lords was informing the peers that the present famine in India was without a parallel. Startling as were the figures recited by the Under Secretary, they appear to have excited but little attention in the minds of a people preoccupied with the yet more colossal totals of the South African war reckoning. The comfortable optimism of the Ministry must serve as the excuse of the public. "To be forewarned is to be forearmed" Lord Onslow reminded his noble colleagues, who were doubtless glad to receive the soothing assurance, "and fortunately we are forearmed to meet calamities like this." Were it not for the war, however, there can be no doubt that the people of this country would be displaying more concern than has yet been made visible in a famine, the sufferers from which number between four and five millions of their Indian fellow-subjects. Up to the present the Lords, brief as their discussion was, have given more time to the subject than the House of Commons has found itself able to spare.

Her Majesty's visit to London comes opportunely on the morrow of another triumph by Lord Roberts over the united forces of the two South African Republics. The Queen is a lover of peace and those who know her best say that her satisfaction in recent British successes has been greatly enhanced by the prospect which a series of victories must tend to encourage of a speedy termination to one of the most fratricidal wars of the century. Signs are not lacking either in this country or abroad of the renewed vitality of the peace move-

ment. The statement may seem paradoxical, but there is nevertheless reason to believe that one of the most hopeful indications of feeling in high quarters is to be found in the "round robin" which certain Jingo Conservative members are now exploiting in the lobbies of the House of Commons. This precious document is intended to strengthen the hands of the aggressive section of the Cabinet and to discredit those who "seek no territory and seek no gold." But the mere fact that it should have been thought necessary to organise so unusual a movement is in itself a testimony to the good faith of some of Lord Salisbury's colleagues. That all will not break their pledges is evidently the fear of their less scrupulous followers. Lord Salisbury, of course, is himself regarded as the chief stumbling block. He and his coterie have hopelessly committed themselves to a policy of "magnanimity," and for that reason the Prime Minister is disliked and distrusted by the hot-headed Chauvinists who look to Mr. Chamberlain as their spokesman. Happily, the turn of the tide of battle in South Africa appears to be bringing with it an accession of sobriety and reason to the great masses of our people at home.

Dissolution rumours have been rending the political atmosphere for the last few days, and despite the Budget the scare has not yet subsided. Much will depend on the progress of the war. If Lord Roberts continues his victorious march, unchecked, to Bloemfontein and succeeds in reducing Pretoria before June the Government may be tempted to dissolve Parliament in the autumn. A dissolution on the terms of settlement would be popular with the Conservatives, especially if it were understood in advance that the Ministry had bound themselves to the wheels of Mr. Chamberlain's chariot. But it is extremely improbable that the Government have formed a definite plan on the subject. What they have done, by introducing the Budget prematurely and cutting their legislative programme down to nothing, has been to leave themselves a clear course for dissolution at the propitious moment. Their policy in this as in most things will be one of cynical opportunism.

THE FAMINE IN INDIA.

4,374,000 ON RELIEF.

The Secretary of State for India has received (March 4) the following telegram from the Viceroy on the subject of the famine:—

No change of any importance. Relief commencing in one district in Madras. It is reported that outlook is very gloomy. On relief:—Bombay, 1,153,000; Punjab, 218,000; Central Provinces, 1,402,000; Berar, 309,000; Ajmere-Merwara, 104,000; Rajputana States, 389,000; Central India, 111,000; Bombay Native States, 431,000; Baroda, 63,000; North-Western Provinces, 3,000; Punjab Native States, 6,000; Central Provinces Native States, 35,000; Hyderabad, 144,000; Madras, 6,000. Total, 4,374,000.

THE MANSION HOUSE FUND.

Down to Wednesday night the Mansion House Fund for the Indian Famine Sufferers amounted to £120,949, of which £115,900 has already been sent to India. On Wednesday the Lord Mayor received the following telegram from the Chief Justice of Bengal:—"Calcutta, March 7. Please accept the heartiest thanks of the Executive Committee of the Famine Fund for most generous donations already received.—Sir Francis Maclean."

THE "INVESTORS' REVIEW" FUND.

We take the following from the current issue (March 3) of the *Investors' Review*:—

We have again most cordially to thank some of our readers for the kindly help they have given, and can assure them and others that the money will be well and carefully spent. A shilling even goes some way to alleviate distress, but all that we can give will amount to little in the long run; that is the heartbreaking thing about it. Supineness now and indifference—an indifference so profound that even the Lord Mayor's well-advertised fund has not yet reached £120,000—must bring nearer by many years the day when the people of England will stand face to face with the necessity of assuming some portion of India's burdens to prevent that great dependency from foundering under our control. The present system of governmental extravagance cannot continue much longer without ending in a disastrous breakdown; nevertheless, it will be much to India, and do much in strengthening our hold over the confidence of its many millions, who always live cheek by jowl with hunger, if we now expand our charity to embrace their appalling necessities.

Subjoined is the list and amount of subscriptions received for our little fund up to date. May we again repeat that it is a fund, every farthing of which will be put to good uses, especially in helping the starved cultivators to replace their lost cattle and that the more help we can give in this direction the sooner will the distressed provinces and Native States—for they cannot be forgotten in the present misery—recover some of their ancient prosperity? Cheques and postal orders should be drawn to A. J. Wilson, crossed Union Bank of London, Famine Fund Account.

Amount acknowledged to date	£122	2
A Friend	1	0
Miss Reaves	5	0
X. Y. Z., London, E.C.	52	10
Danby S. Christopher	10	0
An Old Friend	0	10
G. A. Schott	1	0
Miss Thompson	1	1
Lord Provost Mathewson, Dundee	5	0
A. P. Mathewson	5	0
J. Mathewson	5	0
G. Mayall	5	0
W. B.	0	10
Mrs. N. G.	0	10
	£214	3

THE MANCHESTER FUND.

The Committee of the Manchester Indian Famine Fund met on Tuesday in the Town Hall. Sir F. Forbes Adams presided, and there was a full attendance of the members. It was reported that the subscription list amounted to £15,656 19s. 3d.

A BELFAST FUND.

SPEECH BY LORD DUFFERIN.

The Lord Mayor of Belfast presided on Tuesday over a public meeting held with a view to promoting a fund in Belfast in aid of the sufferers through the distress in India. A resolution, opening a subscription list, was proposed by the Marquis of Dufferin and Ava, who said it was his good fortune during his term of office in India to escape the great calamity of famine, yet the possibility of such a contingency arising was never absent from the minds of their Government, and during each year of his occupation of the office of Governor-General they were making preparations in view of the possibility of such a terrible thing overshadowing the land. Having described the means adopted for dealing with famine, he said that at this moment there were more than four millions of people being kept alive simply by the agency of the Government, and he thought he could say with perfect truth that the history of the world had never presented such a spectacle as that which was seen when a Government, by its sole exertions, was enabled to sustain and to keep the body and soul together of such multitudes. But although the Government was able to do this through imposing upon India a debt from which it would be likely to suffer for many years to come, it was right that the people of England, who had undertaken the administration of that vast Empire, should also give help. As one who probably understood the extent and circumstances of the distress that prevailed better than many of those present, he called upon them with all his heart and soul to come to the assistance of their suffering fellow-countrymen in India. The resolution was seconded by the President of the Chamber of Commerce, supported by Mr. Thomas Sinclair and Professor Whitla, and passed.

THE LONDON INDIAN SOCIETY.

CONFERENCE AT WESTMINSTER TOWN HALL.

The Conference held on Thursday, the 1st inst., under the auspices of the London Indian Society, at the Westminster Town Hall was a great success. The attendance was large and thoroughly representative of resident Indians from all parts of the United Kingdom. Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji was announced to take the Chair, but, as he had been suffering from a severe attack of pneumonia and was not completely recovered when the Conference met, he was not able to fulfil his engagement. At the commencement of the proceedings Dr. Mullick read the following letter from Mr. Naoroji:—

"Dear Dr. Mullick,—I am now well, but the doctor says that, though I am completely convalescent from my attack of pneumonia, I am not at present in a fit state of health to attend a public meeting. I therefore request you to move, on my behalf, the resolution which is in my name.—Yours truly, Dadabhai Naoroji."

Upon the motion of Dr. Mullick, Mr. G. Paramaswaran Pillai, B.A., the editor of the *Madras Standard*, was voted to the Chair, and he was supported on the platform by Dr. Mullick, Mr. Martin Wood (formerly editor of the *Times of India*), and Messrs. C. M. Thacker, J. M. Parikh, J. J. Mody, J. Collins, G. Fellows, A. Das, A. G. Pirzado, S. G. Gyani, and other prominent members of the London Indian Society.

The Chairman said he fully appreciated the great honour they had done him by electing him to preside over their deliberations, although he greatly deplored the incident that had called him to the Chair. Indians throughout the world always looked upon Mr. Naoroji as the champion of their rights and privileges. (Hear, hear.) They had met that afternoon to discuss Indian affairs and to find out the opinions and the trend of thought upon Indian policy of those who had attended at that gathering. They wished especially to hear the opinions and criticisms of the young Indians present, because upon

them would devolve the task of building up the political opinion of India in the future.

Letters apologising for their inability to be present and sympathising with the objects of the conference were read from Sir William Wedderburn, M.P., Mr. J. H. Yoxall, M.P., Mr. Herbert Lewis, M.P., and Mr. John Wilson.

The CHAIRMAN then moved the first resolution as follows:—"That this Conference is of opinion that famines of India are preventable; that the main cause is the evil of the drain from the resources of India caused by an unnatural economic system of government, and that until this cause is fully faced and dealt with there is no chance for an effective remedy or for the general welfare of the people of India; that for the immediate remedy for the present calamity this Conference, while very thankful for the Mansion House Fund and other similar efforts, prays for a substantial financial assistance by a direct grant from the British Exchequer." He said that it was absolutely necessary that their rulers should thoroughly understand this question. England had established in India a Government which was the costliest in the world, and their unfortunate country had not only to maintain that form of Government, but India had also to support largely the institutions of this country. The position of the Government of India seemed to him to be that they wanted to have the cake and eat it as well. The people of India were in such a position that even in times of prosperity they could not save anything for their requirements in times of adversity, and during famines they had to suffer severely. He would now read to them a letter from Mr. Naoroji expressing his views upon this resolution:—

"Ladies and Gentlemen,—I am sorry that I am unable to be present at the meeting, and I have requested my friend, Mr. Pillai, to read the few remarks with which to introduce the resolution that is in my name.

"I desire at the outset to express my deep regret at the death of Sir William Hunter. He was sympathetic and fair-minded towards the Indian people, and he has left some legacies which will always keep his name fresh in our memory and in our gratitude.

"I must thank here the press very sincerely for the earnest way in which it has pressed on the public ear their duty in this matter of the famine, and have also anticipated the grant from the British Exchequer; for the Lord Mayor's fund and all other such funds that are being raised in different ways, there is no need to say how deeply I feel grateful. I do not want to take up your time with a description of the harrowing accounts of the intensity of the famine which you all read every day in the press. I shall only state a few broad facts pertinent to the resolution which I desire to move.

"Since the commencement of the connexion between England and India many wars have taken place in India and on its borders, with the ultimate result of the formation of the great British Empire in India. These wars, with an army of two hundred to two hundred and fifty thousand Indian troops, with a small portion of British troops, must have cost hundreds of millions and much blood. Besides the formation of the British empire in India, its maintenance from beginning to end must have cost some hundreds of millions. I wish the India Office could give anything like a correct account of what the formation and the maintenance of the British empire has cost.

"Next to this the East India Company, from its commencement, remitted to this country every year, a large amount of its wealth which, at least as public remittances, was supposed to be three millions a year. A survey of the condition of Bengal and Behar was taken from 1807 to 1816. The records in the India House were available for examination by Mr. Montgomery Martin in 1835, and his ultimate remark on this investigation is significant: 'It is impossible to avoid remarking two facts as peculiarly striking—first, the richness of the country, and second, the poverty of its inhabitants.' . . . .

"'The annual drain of £3,000,000 on British India has amounted in 30 years, at 12 per cent., to the enormous sum of £723,900,000 sterling. . . . So constant and accumulating a drain even in England would soon impoverish her. How severe then must be its effect on India where the wage of a labourer is from twopence to threepence a day.'"

"I do not mean to enter into the justice or injustice of the various events, I only want to state facts. Besides this public remittance to this country, it is utterly impossible to form any estimate of the private remittances of the officials of the day, who amassed vast wealth by corruption and oppression of every kind. What was during the last century public remittance of some three millions per year, has now developed itself into a far larger amount in various ways. First and foremost, Rs. 200,000,000 must be found every year by the poor people of India to pay for European services in both countries before they can enjoy even a farthing's worth of their own produce themselves. During the last few years by a stroke of the pen the Government have managed to impose upon the taxpayer, under disguise, fifty per cent. more taxation than was due from him, by the new currency legislation. By means thereof the burden of Rs. 200,000,000 has been raised to about 300,000,000 of true rupees under disguise of the inflated false rupee of sixteen pence.

"This no doubt is a very serious charge of increasing taxation in a concealed manner, and naturally anyone of the audience might ask me why I had not gone to the Currency Committee to be examined if I had such a serious charge against the Government. The fact is that I had placed my views as fully as possible before the Currency Committee in a pamphlet on the whole question then before the Committee, stating distinctly that the Government's proposals amounted to a sudden increase of 40 to 50 per cent. additional taxation; and I offered in my statement to be cross-examined, but I was not invited to be cross-examined.

"To sum up, of the whole cost of all the wars that have taken place in the formation of the British Empire in India, and for the maintenance of this Empire, not a single farthing has ever been spent by the British people. The whole burden of the cost has been laid upon the Indian people to the last farthing. I would only give one instance which would show the spirit and the manner in which the people of India have been all along treated. In the Mutiny the people remained thoroughly loyal. Even new regiments were formed from the people to fight with their kith and kin, and British supremacy prevailed over the mutineers. What was the reward of that to the people? Every farthing of the cost of that mutiny was put upon the people, who had no part soever in giving the trouble. This is what Mr. Bright says about it. In speaking on the Loan Debate in March, 1859, Mr. Bright said: "I think that the 40,000,000 sterling which this revolution will cost is a grievous burden to place on the people of India. . . . If every man had what was just no doubt that 40,000,000 would have to be paid out of the taxes levied upon the people of this country." Similarly, to take an instance of the wars outside the frontiers. The first and second Afghan wars were decidedly in the interests both of England and India, as well as all frontier wars; for England—for its very existence in India; for India—to save itself from Russian rule. But every farthing of the cost of these wars has been laid upon the Indian people with the only exception that for the second Afghan war, which cost more than 20,000,000, only 5,000,000 were paid from the British Exchequer. The whole treatment of India has been such from the beginning of this connexion up to the present day. Besides, the cost of everything with which the name of India could be connected, no matter how much soever British interests were involved in it, was laid on the shoulders of India; and in addition to that up to the present day tens of thousands of millions of the wealth of that country have been drained away to this country, rendering it the poorest and most wretched country on the face of the earth. This, then, is only the true cause of the poverty and the consequent famine, plague, and diseases of every kind from which that wretched country suffers.

"Besides the payment of the whole cost of the British Indian Empire and the thousands of millions of remittance, the normal condition at present is what arises, first, from Rs. 200,000,000 (now Rs. 300,000,000) necessary to be provided for the European agencies; next, the natural development of the helplessness and the utter inability of India to have any capital of her own, the whole management of its resources being entirely in the hands of British interests; and the result is that every year on an average from some Rx. 30,000,000 to Rx. 40,000,000 are drawn from Indian wealth to England, whether India be famishing, perishing, or whatever its condition may be. Under these circumstances I ask any honest Englishman to say whether it is possible for any country in the world, England not excepted, not to be reduced to wretchedness and all the evils of poverty; and whether it is not the duty of England to help India in her present direct condition, and pay from the British exchequer the cost of the famine. We, as Indians, will of course receive every help with gratitude; but it is for the British public to consider whether the drain the continuous, enormous, drain, being the cause of these famines, England should not pay for such famines. It must be remembered that I am not asking England to pay anything from its own pocket, but to pay a portion, a quarter or one-half, as the case may be, of what it receives every year from India. If this relief is not given, the whole cost of the relief of the famine to the Government of India will simply mean so much additional future burden upon those very wretched people themselves; for every farthing spent by the Government of India will be exacted from them, making every successive famine more onerous and destructive than the present one.

"I will only give the views of a few eminent English statesmen as to the light in which they consider these aspects of the relation of India with England. Lord Mayo has said: 'I believe we have not done our duty to the people of this land. Millions have been spent on the conquering race which might have been spent in enriching and elevating the children of the soil.' And he insists that unless less is spent on the 'interests,' and more on the people, much good cannot be done to India.

"I will only give one more view, that of the statesman upon whose knowledge of India and upon whose statesmanship I rely most, I mean, Lord Salisbury. He has frankly and boldly pointed out that the principle upon which India has been governed was that India must be bled; the result of which he pointed out that the agricultural population is now without any blood, and that the main evil of the position is that India has to part with a large portion of its produce every year without an adequate return.

"The next point I wish to refer to is that famine is no more inevitable in India than it is in this country. England does not produce one-fourth or one-third of the food it wants, and yet there is no famine here. India also need have no famine at all if, as Bright says, she is allowed a chance of enjoying her own. If the people of England only once realise its true cause the remedy will not be long in forthcoming. This is no occasion on which I could go minutely into details of the remedies. I will just touch on the words of one or two eminent men. Sir William Hunter has said: 'I hope that this country will realise once for all the poverty of the people from whom Indian revenues are raised. When we have already recognised this we shall see that the smallest act of financial sharp dealing with India is an act not only of iniquity, but of cruelty and meanness, and one which carries with it lasting reproach.' And he points out where the true key of the whole position is: 'You cannot work with imported labour as cheaply as you can with native labour; and I regard the more extended employment of the Natives not only as an act of justice, but as a financial necessity.' . . . . 'If we are to govern the Indian people efficiently and cheaply we must govern them by means of themselves, and pay for the administration at the market rates of native labour.' . . . . 'Forty years hereafter we should have an Indian Ireland, multiplied fifty-fold, on our hands.' . . . . 'But the good work thus commenced (that is, security of person, property, etc.) has assumed such dimensions under the Queen's Government of India that it can no longer be carried on or even supervised by imported labour from England, except at a cost which India cannot sustain.' I have given rather more sentences from Sir William Hunter's views also to show what a thorough grasp he had of the true position of India and his sympathy with the people.

"I will give you one more instance from another high authority, namely, the Duke of Devonshire. He says: 'If the country is to be better governed that can only be done by the employment of the best and most intelligent of the Natives in the service.' Similar sentiments have been expressed by Lord Salisbury, Lord Iddesleigh, and others.

"As I have said already, I cannot enter into minute details on this occasion, especially as Sir Henry Fowler has given an opportunity, by appointing the Royal Commission on Indian Expenditure, to discuss this most important question. I have placed before the Commission a series of statements from various aspects. I may say this much here that there is no statesman more thoroughly cognisant of the true causes of the present deplorable condition of India than Lord Salisbury. He has thoroughly mastered the true remedy for India, not as a mere new scheme but as a practical plan, which he and Lord Iddesleigh most successfully inaugurated and carried out in all its details with the most brilliant and satisfactory result in regard to one part of India, namely, Mysore. I have entered into details of this bright episode in the history of British India, and what has made Lord Cranborne's (Lord Salisbury) and Sir Stafford Northcote's (Lord Iddesleigh) names remembered with every gratitude. As to, therefore, the details of what should be done in order to make famines impossible in India, and to raise India to a condition of prosperity with much more good to Britain than it now derives from India, I must leave to be seen in the papers that I have laid before the Commission.

"I will conclude these few remarks with the sincere hope that the British people will no longer allow their indifference towards the people of India to prevent them from doing justice to India, and benefiting and blessing both India and their own country. I hope that the British Government will seriously consider the desirability and duty of making a grant from the British Exchequer to cope against the present famine, and will take as early as possible such steps as to prevent famines altogether. I do not want to cry for the past: the past is gone. But I pray the future should not continue to be as deplorable as the past, that means will be taken by the British public to bring about a better state of affairs in India, a more attached devotion of the people of India to the British rule, and benefits lasting and vast to both countries. I cannot end more appropriately than by repeating the great, the noble words of our Sovereign at the conclusion of her great Proclamation of 1858. She said: 'In their prosperity will be our strength, in their contentment our security, and in their gratitude our best reward. And may the God of all power grant to us and to those in authority under us strength to carry out these our wishes for the good of our people.' We Indian people ask for nothing more. Let the great Proclamation be faithfully carried out as our Sovereign wishes, and there is no doubt that India will be prosperous and be England's strength; will be contented and will be England's security; and not only be full of gratitude as England's best reward, but England in the natural course of righteousness will be benefited then materially many more fold than what it is at present."

Mr. C. M. Thacker seconded the resolution. He said that famines did not occur in India on account of the scarcity of food there, but the reason was that during a famine the poor people possessed nothing with which to purchase grain. There were plenty of railways to carry the grain to the doors of the hungry people, but they had not got the pennies in their pockets to purchase that grain. It had been stated that the rate of increase of the population of India had been so rapid that no Government could feed them, and that India was bound to grow poorer. He would point out that the population of England had increased enormously during the same period, but she had not grown poorer. The average income of a man in England was £44 per annum, but in India it was only £2. (Shame.) In Holland the average income was £26, in Italy £12, Germany £18, Austria £16, France £25, Switzerland £16, Denmark £23, and in Turkey—which is governed by that un-Christian despot, the Sultan—the income was £4 per head per annum. He thought they were entitled to substantial financial assistance from the British Exchequer, and he had great pleasure in seconding the resolution.

In support of the resolution Miss Annie A. Smith read the following letter from Mr. William Digby:—

"Mr. C. M. Thacker and Mr. A. Das, Hon. Secs., London Indian Society. Meeting at Westminster Town Hall, London.

"Dear Sirs,—I am in receipt of your card of invitation to a Conference to be held on Thursday next at the Westminster Town Hall, to consider, chiefly, a Resolution concerning the existing Famine in India and Indian Famines generally.

"It is with great regret I find I shall not be in England on Thursday. Had I been, I should have made an effort to accept your invitation, and should have asked to be permitted to speak to the Resolution, which Mr. Naoroji is to propose. In his hands 'the unnatural economic system of Government' in India, which, I am only too sure, is the real cause of the frequent and destructive famines with which, unhappily, we are now too much acquainted, will be most fully and most trustworthily dealt with. What he states in the way of demonstrated circumstance and fact may be accepted as well.

"Mr. Naoroji's denunciation of the present mode of administration of India, judging that administration, as he does, solely by its results, is, perhaps, the most serious indictment ever brought against any body of rulers: certainly it is the most terrible charge ever brought against a ruling race, whose most strenuous desire has been to bring prosperity and upliftment to the people ruled, and not to become guilty of spoliation. Yet, deliberate spoliation, ruthlessly carried out, could scarcely be more destructive than is our mode of ruling India, or cause more suffering. I anticipate Mr. Naoroji will support his contention, that your first Resolution should be adopted, with an array of facts, which should carry conviction to every reasonable mind. If these facts are of a character with such as he has previously stated on this subject, there ought to be no hesitation on the part of anyone in voting for the Resolution.

"My own studies on the lines Mr. Naoroji has made specially his own, have convinced me:—(1) That famines in India are preventible; (2) that the economic drain from the resources of India is the cause of the poverty, of which famines are an outward and visible sign; (3) that our system of ruling is economically vicious and must be accompanied by the awful consequences with which we have become familiar, and with which (is it conceivable?) we are beginning to accustom ourselves, as though matters must be as they are, as though many more millions of people than there are in the United Kingdom, must be in a chronic state of starvation; and (4) that to remedy the evil will be so tremendous a task, will involve so great an interference with vested interests, that I, for one, wholly despair of a remedy being found until a catastrophe, far beyond anything yet realised by the most miserable of States, has occurred, and has quickened (under the eyes of wondering nations that a British Government should have allowed such things to come to pass) the sense of duty in every Englishman and English woman.

"Had the opportunity of speaking been mine, I think I should have devoted my remarks particularly to my fourth conclusion. It is, to my mind, fully time that attention should be directed to a series of drastic reforms, amounting to an administrative and economic revolution. Failing this, and failing also an adequate conception of the need, already existing, for the most strenuous performance of the highest tasks of reconstructive statesmanship, the British people will be brought face to face with the solution of a problem, by the side of which the South African Campaign will be but child's play. This will not happen to-morrow, nor next year, nor the year after. But, twenty to thirty years hence, preceded by yearly increasing suffering and destitution, those who come after us will find only too true a fulfilment of so dismal a prophecy.

"Believing all this with my whole nature, remembering that my belief is founded wholly upon official statistics and statements—the subject of more or less study during thirty years—I am tempted to ask myself whether there is any duty before our countrymen so important as that of endeavouring to see justice done to, and amelioration provided for, a people, whom we, by our acts, have brought into the distressful condition experienced, unhappily, now by the majority of the Indian people.

"India is not wanting in champions. Mr. Naoroji is giving his life to the task. Sir William Wedderburn is indefatigable in his efforts to right the wrongs he has seen during many years of administrative work. There are others, who, by speech or pen, are unwearied in their efforts to enlighten Great Britain on this topic. Conspicuously among journals, is the *Manchester Guardian* — the greatest friend in the British Press with which India has ever been favoured. But what are these against the too-securely entrenched officials, who like the Muazzin from the Mosque Tower, urge that all is well in India, when, under their own eyes, a 'bleeding' is taking place which they will not heed? At least your Society is a standing protest, and your meeting of Thursday a warning cry, against such a state of things.

"May the movement your Society typifies become widespread, and may such a cry as you are now raising increase in volume and not be stilled until it has pierced every ear and awakened every conscience to the misery existing in India and developed a sense of the responsibility which every one of us bears towards our starving and ever-suffering fellow-subjects in India!

"I again express my regret that I cannot attend your meeting, and ask, if your arrangements permit, that this letter may be read thereat, as expressive of the views reluctantly accepted by but impressed by irrefutable facts upon

"Yours faithfully,
"Wm. Digby.

"Hotel St. Pétersbourg, Paris,
"Feb. 27, 1900."

Dr. Clark, M.P., said he intended to support in the House of Commons the resolution which had just been proposed and seconded on the ground that the British Government was responsible for the condition of things in India. The British Government had allowed the Indian Government to spend the Famine Fund for other purposes, and having done that they ought now to make a grant from the Imperial Exchequer. The poverty of India, like that of Ireland and other parts of England, was caused because they had a system of rack-renting the peasants. Years ago he went through a famine in India with Mr. Digby, and he saw people dying in the streets for the want of food, although at that time there were thousands of bags of grain at Madras. India was a very poor country with a very expensive system of government, and this kept the standard of comforts so low that between comfort and destitution there was only a very thin wall indeed. He did not think the famine was due to over-population, for there was always enough food in India, and famine was limited to certain places. It was a scandal to this country that there should ever be a single death from famine in India.

The Chairman put the resolution, which was unanimously carried.

Mr. G. Singh Gyani moved: "That the president and secretaries of the London Indian Society be requested to present a memorial to the Prime Minister embodying the resolution just adopted, and praying for his kind and favourable consideration and action thereon." He thought that now that the British troops had relieved Ladysmith the Government ought to devote their attention towards making an effort to relieve India.

Mr. Parikh, in seconding, said that such a grant as they were asking for would very much lighten the burden of taxation upon the poor people of India. He fervently hoped that the Prime Minister would be able to make some substantial grant to India for this purpose.

Mr. Martin Wood, in supporting the resolution, said that India had every claim for substantial assistance from Imperial sources, not only on account of India's need, but on the ground of political equity. On the list of Home Charges against India the largest sum was for pensions and furloughs, which amounted this year to £5,000,000. The whole of that money was disbursed in this country. England derived the benefit of it, for it was drawn from India and none of it went back. (Shame.) He thought that amount might very justly be returned to India as a grant from the British Exchequer.

The motion was unanimously adopted.

Dr. Mullick then moved the following resolution: "That this Conference views with deep concern the political disabilities and troubles of Indian subjects of her Majesty in South Africa, and urges the Government to effectively remedy this state of affairs on the conclusion of the present war." He said this was an old question, but he thought the present time was an opportune moment for bringing it before the people of this country. It was astonishing that after five years' residence in Natal if Indians did not wish to re-indenture, they were obliged to take out a licence. He had never known before such a thing as the taking out of licence to settle down in any country. He would like to know if any Englishman would pay £4 a year for the privilege of living in a country. In Natal electoral privileges were denied to Indians, for the Act of Parliament only gave a vote to Europeans. In Natal the Indian population were treated far worse than Uitlanders, for no coloured person was allowed to go out after nine o'clock at night, and no coloured man was allowed to travel on the railways in first or second class carriages. (Shame.) With regard to the war he was sorry that Indian troops had not been allowed to take an active part in it, for wherever they had fought for England they had always exhibited conspicuous bravery. (Applause.) He trusted that this subject would receive the immediate attention of the Government upon the termination of the war.

Mr. Pirzado seconded the resolution. He said that Indians had helped to build up this great Empire all over the world, and they had fought many battles for Great Britain. In asking for the removal of the political disabilities of Indian subjects in South Africa they were not asking for a favour but simply for justice to Indian subjects. (Applause.)

The resolution was unanimously agreed to.

The Chairman announced that he had just received the following telegram:—

"The members of the Mauratan Society of Oxford are in entire sympathy with the resolution of Mr. Dadabhai Naoroji as to the relief of famine in India, and hope his efforts will be crowned with success.—V. Randit, Secretary."

A resolution thanking Sir William Wedderburn, M.P., Mr. Herbert Roberts, M.P., Mr. C. P. Scott, M.P., and Mr. W. S. Caine for their services on behalf of the cause was enthusiastically agreed to, and a hearty vote of thanks to the Chairman for presiding terminated the proceedings.

Imperial Parliament.

Thursday, March 1.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

PENSIONS.

Sir Seymour King asked the Secretary of State for India, whether his attention had been called to the fact that the widows and orphans of subscribers to the Bengal, Bombay, and Madras Military Fund who wished to reside and draw their pensions in India were obliged by the Government to draw them at the old fixed rate of 2s. 3d. to the rupee, thus being mulcted of nearly 50 per cent. of the value of their pensions, whereas if pensions were drawn in England, Ceylon, or elsewhere they were paid at the official rate of exchange:

Whether he was aware that the effect of this anomaly was to prevent recipients of these pensions from joining their relatives in India who might be engaged in the Military or Civil Service:

And, whether it could be arranged that such pensions should be settled for in India at the official rate or might be drawn in London.

Lord G. Hamilton: The pensions to which my hon. friend refers were fixed in rupees by the subscribers themselves; but payments to persons resident in this country or in the colonies are made, not at the official rate of exchange, but at a special rate of about 2s. 3d. the rupee, in accordance with a guarantee given in the Statute 29 Vic., cap. 18.

Naturally, this exceptional advantage ceases if a recipient of one of these pensions goes to reside in India; but for the benefit of pensioners wishing to visit that country for a period not exceeding one year, the Secretary of State, as a concession, allows their pensions to be accumulated during their absence, and the accumulations are paid to them on their return at the exceptional rate of exchange above mentioned.

It will be seen that these arrangements give exceptionally favourable treatment to this class of pensioners at the expense of the revenues of India; and I am not prepared to accept the suggestion in the last clause of my honourable friend's question, which would have the effect of increasing the burden on those revenues.

OPERATIONS ON THE NORTH-WEST FRONTIER.

Mr. Herbert Roberts asked the Secretary of State for India, whether, as reported, special Military operations were contemplated by the Government of India on the North-West Frontier.

Lord G. Hamilton: I have no knowledge of the reports referred to by the hon. member, nor am I aware that any special Military operations are contemplated by the Government of India on the North-West Frontier.

CONSULAR OFFICERS.

Mr. Cohen asked the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether her Majesty's Government was aware if there would be any objection by the Russian Government to the re-establishment of the British Consulate at Tiflis, and to the creation of a Consulate at Baku; and, if there be no such objection, whether it was intended to re-establish the first and to create the second.

Mr. Brodrick: I have already stated that the Russian Government have been informed that it was understood they would be ready to agree to the re-establishment of a Consulate at Tiflis in exchange for the appointment of a Russian Consul at Bombay, but that no formal notification has yet been received of an appointment to the latter post. No communications have taken place with regard to the establishment of a Consulate at Baku. It has not as yet been decided whether the appointment of Consular officers to reside at Tiflis or Baku is required.

REMISSIONS AND SUSPENSIONS OF LAND REVENUE.

Sir William Wedderburn asked the Secretary of State for India, with reference to the sums of Rx. 1,520,000 and Rx. 2,130,000, total remissions and suspensions of land revenue on account of famine in India in 1876-7 and 1896-7 respectively, whether he would state what portions of these sums were subsequently recovered from the landholders.

Lord G. Hamilton: Of the remission of revenue, no portion was subsequently recovered. Of the suspensions, a very large portion was afterwards converted into remissions, or, in other words, was never recovered; but I cannot state the exact amount.

REGULATIONS AND WAGES ON RELIEF.

Sir William Wedderburn asked the Secretary of State for India, with reference to the Viceroy's telegram of February 20, whether he would state what were the stricter regulations referred to as having diminished the number of persons on famine relief in Berar:

And, whether he would state what was the average daily wage paid to men, women, and children employed on relief works, with its equivalent in sterling.

Lord G. Hamilton: In accordance with the recommendation of the Famine Commission, relief work is now given only to such persons as are willing to do a full day's work "in return for a wage sufficient for the purpose of maintenance but not more." This test, which is known as "the labour test," was not applied in Berar during the earliest stages of the famine. But it is now known that the numbers on relief work in that province have not been diminished, as was supposed, but have increased from 243,000 on January 22 to 308,000 on February 24.

The average daily wage cannot be stated in sterling, being based upon the current price of food in the district in question, and varying accordingly from week to week. The wage for an adult is the money equivalent of from $1\frac{1}{2}$ to $2\frac{1}{4}$ lbs. of grain per diem

THE TELEGRAPHIC PRESS MESSAGES BILL.

Sir William Wedderburn asked the Secretary of State for India, whether his attention had been drawn to the minutes of dissent recorded by the Mahárájá of Darbhanga, and the Hon. Mr. Mehta on the Telegraphic Messages Bill, to the effect that, on account of the high telegraphic rates, the Bill would not, as desired, produce a first rate telegraphic service for India, but would create a monopoly in favour of a few daily newspapers:

And, whether he would use his influence to obtain a reduction in the telegraphic rates to India.

Lord G. Hamilton: I have read the minutes referred to but their contention seemed to me to be far-fetched, though I admit and am pressing the advisability of a reduction of the telegraphic rates to India.

RUSSIA AND PERSIA.

Mr. Hedderwick asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether the new Russian loan to Persia supplanted the British loan:

Whether her Majesty's Government had the option from the Bank of Persia of guaranteeing the new loan before it was taken up by Russia:

And, whether her Majesty's Government declined to guarantee it.

Mr. Brodrick: It is understood that a portion of the new Persian loan is to be applied to paying off any existing foreign loans, and presumably it is intended that what is called the Régie Loan, issued by the Imperial Bank of Persia, should be so paid off. No proposals have been made to her Majesty's Government for a loan to Persia which they felt themselves able to accept, and the arrangement for the present loan was concluded without any offer being made to them.

INDIAN TROOPS IN AFRICA.

Mr. Buchanan asked the Secretary of State for India, whether the Indian Government had now been repaid in full by the Home Government the expenses connected with the despatch and maintenance of the Indian troops sent to British East Africa and Uganda in 1896 and 1897:

What had been the cause of the delay in the settlement of these accounts:

And, whether he would lay upon the Table the Correspondence that had passed between the Governments and Departments on the subject.

Lord G. Hamilton: The Government of India has been repaid all charges in connexion with the despatch and maintenance of the Indian troops sent to British East Africa and Uganda to the end of September, 1898, and the accounts of the quarter to the end of December, 1898, the latest date to which they have been received from India, are now under examination at the Foreign Office.

There has been no delay in the settlement of the accounts in England.

The correspondence is a mass of detail, consisting of the transmission of twelve quarterly accounts, and the questions arising thereon. It would be of no public interest.

INDIAN TROOPS OUTSIDE INDIA.

Mr. Buchanan asked the Secretary of State for India what was the number of Native troops now serving in Mauritius and elsewhere outside of India, and did the Imperial Government in all cases bear the entire charge of all the troops so serving.

Lord G. Hamilton: Two Native infantry regiments are now serving in Mauritius, one in Ceylon, and one in Singapore; and there are small detachments in Uganda, Central Africa, and the Niger Protectorate. I do not include among these the Hong Kong Regiment and the companies of Indian Native artillery serving at Hong Kong, Singapore, Mauritius, and Ceylon, which were raised and are maintained for Imperial purposes.

I am unable to state the exact numbers of these forces. In all these cases the Imperial Government or the administration under which the troops are serving bears the entire charge.

TELEGRAPHIC COMMUNICATION BETWEEN ENGLAND AND INDIA.

Sir MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE asked the Secretary of State for India, whether, considering that a reduction in the rates of telegraphic communication between England and India had for many years past been urged by the chambers of commerce and others interested in commercial relations between the two countries, he would endeavour to bring about the desired result at as early a date as possible.

Lord G. HAMILTON: The subject of a reduction of the telegraphic tariff between Europe and India has engaged for some time past my attention with a view to bringing about a reduction of rates.

CHAPLAINS OF THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND.

Sir MARK STEWART asked the Secretary of State for India, whether, seeing that Clause 51, chapter 155, of the Act of George III had not been repealed, he could state by what authority was the Bishop of Calcutta justified in exercising a jurisdiction over the chaplains of the Church of Scotland in India.

Lord G. HAMILTON: I am at a loss to understand the question of my hon. friend. I am not aware that the Bishop of Calcutta exercises or claims to exercise any jurisdiction over chaplains of the Church of Scotland in India.

Sir M. STEWART asked whether it was not a fact that the Bishop of Calcutta prohibited chaplains of the Church of Scotland from exercising any ministerial functions in consecrated churches.

Lord G. HAMILTON: If a chaplain of the Church of Scotland wants to make use of a consecrated church belonging to the Church of England he has to obtain the Bishop's authority. I fail to see that this is exercising jurisdiction over them.

Monday, March 5.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

THE FAMINE IN INDIA.

Lord REAY asked the Under Secretary for India whether he could give any information as to the number of people engaged on relief works or receiving support in other ways; as to the estimated expenditure and the expenditure hitherto incurred; as to the expediency of increased outlay on irrigation works: and as to the terms on which advances would be made to agriculturists for restocking their holdings, taking into account the mortality among cattle.

The Earl of ONSLOW said he desired to associate himself with the opening remarks of the noble lord in deploring the great extent and unusual severity of the famine in India which had followed so closely on the famine of 1897-98. The fact that it had followed so closely upon its predecessor made it somewhat difficult for him to reply as fully as he could wish to the enquiries of the noble lord, because the Government of India, having made careful enquiry through the Commission presided over by Sir James Lyall, had referred the report of that Commission to the different local Governments with a view to obtaining their opinion on the many points raised, and naturally they had not had the advantage of learning what their views were before this famine was upon them. Nevertheless, he could assure the noble lord that the Government of India very highly appreciated the work done by the Commission, and the Secretary of State had communicated to the Government of India his appreciation of their labours, with an expression of the hope that they would proceed with the least delay possible to do all that they could to carry into effect the recommendations of the Commission. During the week ending March 3, which was the last return they had, there were 4,375,000 persons receiving relief, and, according to the latest detailed reports for the week ending February 11, out of that total 84½ per cent. were employed on relief works and 15½ per cent. were receiving relief in other ways. Therefore, something like 584,000 people were receiving gratuitous relief. He was not able to tell the noble lord how far the Government of India had been able to make a programme of public works and of village works separately for the next famine. No doubt the matter had been under consideration, but the famine came upon them so quickly that they were obliged to make use of the material they had in hand, and to complete a detailed plan was not possible. The plan of classifying those who received relief had been altered on the recommendation of the Commission, and they were now divided into the following classes: There was a special class of men who were expert labourers and who were expected to perform a task superior to that of any other class. The two other main classes consisted of men who were able to do harder work, and the carriers, those who were able to carry materials in baskets. In addition to these there were two other classes, children who were able to carry small baskets, and lastly those who were dependent on the other labourers and who were not able to do anything for themselves and were receiving gratuitous relief. With regard to what had been done and the course of the famine, the latest information they had was about the end of January, and at that time the Viceroy anticipated that the cost of the famine would be something like three, or possibly four crores of rupees. Between the time of the commencement of the famine and March 31 he was sorry to say that that expenditure was likely to be considerably increased. Although they had no official estimates, they believed the expenditure was likely to amount to as much as, and possibly more than, five crores of rupees. The reluctance to take advantage of the relief works was diminishing very much in its intensity, and persons were offering their services on the relief works in much larger numbers than was the case in former famines. It was extremely difficult to get at the hill tribes, who cling to their forests and jungles, and endeavoured to support themselves on wild roots; but at any rate in the Presidency of Bombay something had been done in the direction of employing the starving hill tribes to procure and cut fodder for the cattle which in other parts of Bombay were starving for want of fodder. A very large sum of money indeed had been expended on irrigation, and there had been a very good return for the capital so invested. There were some very extensive works in the Punjab and Sindh which were estimated to cost something like Rx. 4,000,000; those projects had not, of course, been put into operation in the short time that had elapsed between the last and the present famine, but at any rate something had been done in the direction of carrying out the recommendations of the Commissioners in that respect. As the noble lord knew, there were already in existence Acts of Parliament enabling the Government to make advances to agriculturists for the purchase of plough cattle and seed grains, and for the improvement of agricultural property; that, of course, was receiving the attention of the Government of India, and when the proper season arrived steps would no doubt be taken for facilitating such advances. Something like a surplus of Rx. 50,000 was left over from the funds subscribed for the former famine, which would be applied to the needs of the present famine. He regretted to say that the present famine was without a parallel in the history of India; fortunately, however, they were forearmed to meet these calamities. The extension of the railway system throughout India had enabled them to reach all parts of the affected area. But the natural consequence of the existence of the railway, of course, was that the price of grain food in different parts of the country was assimilated, and, therefore, although there was not the same danger of acute suffering in particular localities, there was a general raising of the price of food throughout all parts of India. The Government were fully alive to the need for increased vigilance, and there was no danger that discrimination in granting relief would not be exercised.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

PRESBYTERIAN SOLDIERS IN INDIA.

Sir JAMES FERGUSSON asked the Secretary of State for India, whether he had come to any decision in regard to the claim of the Church of Scotland that Presbyterian soldiers in India should share in the use of churches built for Protestants, and that such use should be regulated by some other authority than the bishops of the Church of England.

Lord G. HAMILTON: I have been in communication with the Government of India on the subject referred to in my right hon. friend's question, and propose to present papers to Parliament as soon as my despatch has reached the Viceroy.

INDIAN HOWITZERS.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER asked the Under-Secretary of State for War, whether the practice of making a 5½-inch howitzer for use in India and a 5-inch howitzer for use in the United Kingdom and the Colonies, was still persisted in:

Whether the Military advisers of the War Office had approved the use in two branches of her Majesty's land service of two weapons differing in calibre by half an inch only, but the ammunition of which was not interchangeable:

Whether the War Office approved of the adoption of a different type of gun for Indian service:

And, whether there was any Minister of the Crown, officer, committee, or other authority which had power to insist upon uniformity when the War Office and the India Office could not agree.

Mr. POWELL WILLIAMS: The British 5-inch howitzer and the Indian 5·4-inch howitzer are weapons intended for different purposes, the former being primarily a mobile field howitzer drawn by horses and throwing a 50lb. shell, the latter a siege howitzer drawn by oxen and throwing a 60lb. shell. (Laughter.) As the latter weapon is designed to meet special Indian requirements the War Office sees no occasion to press the objections which might have been raised to the adoption of two different patterns of howitzer. In the event of disagreement between the War Office and India Office the point in dispute would be referred to the Defence Committee of the Cabinet.

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER asked whether, as a matter of fact, there had not been a difference at the time these guns were sanctioned between the War Office and the India Office.

Mr. POWELL WILLIAMS said he did not know.

RUSSIA AND PERSIA.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether her Majesty's Government had given attention to the statements to the effect that the Russian Government had already commenced the construction in Persia of the Zulfa-Tabriz-Hamadan line of railway, with a branch to Teheran, and which was to terminate at Bunder Abbas at the mouth of the Persian Gulf, and that several officers of the general staff had been instructed to watch over the works, having under their orders several regiments of Cossacks:

Whether her Majesty's Government were informed that Persia would grant to Russia the port of Bunder Abbas on the same terms as those under which Port Arthur had been leased to Russia by China, and that it was the intention of Russia to construct a military port and a dockyard, fortified or otherwise, at Bunder Abbas:

And, whether her Majesty's Government had made, or proposed to make, any representations on this subject to the Government of Russia or of Persia.

Mr. BRODRICK: Her Majesty's Government have received no information tending to confirm these statements, and have no grounds for making representations to the Russian Government in regard to them.

RUSSIA IN CENTRAL ASIA.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES asked the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, whether the Amir of Bokhara had ceded to Russia free of cost extensive tracts of land in the upper courses of the Oxus, to be used for farming settlements for colonists from European Russia, and had also given permission to Russia to construct military stations for its Central Asian troops, and the right to establish fortified stations on the frontier of Afghanistan.

Mr. BRODRICK: Her Majesty's Government have received no information to this effect, but it is within the competence of the Amir of Bokhara to make such arrangements as he may deem fit on these points.

Mr. BOWLES: Is Her Majesty's Government destitute of all information whatever? (Opposition laughter.)

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Rt. Hon. Lord HOBHOUSE, K.C.S.I.
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Rt. Hon. Sir RICHARD GARTH, Q.C.
(late Chief Justice of Bengal).

Rt. Hon. Sir RICHARD COUCH
(late Chief Justice of Bengal, Member of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council).

Sir CHARLES SARGENT
(late Chief Justice of Bombay.)

Sir WILLIAM MARKBY, K.C.I.E.
(late Judge of the High Court, Calcutta).

Sir JOHN BUDD PHEAR
(late Judge of the High Court, Calcutta, and Chief Justice of Ceylon).

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